

Putting on Christ.

Christ and his apostles employed a great variety of figures of speech for the purpose of illustrating his spiritual relation to his followers. At one time he is the head of the body of which they are the members; at another time he is the vine of which they are the branches; he is the shepherd of the flock in which they are the sheep. Then they dwell in him and he in them. He gives them the water of life and the bread of life. He is the light of the world and the life of men.

All these figures and a great many more are used for the purpose of conveying to the understanding some impression of the relation which Christ sustains to his disciples. Few of the figures of the New Testament are more striking than the one in which the Apostle Paul represents Christ as the raiment of his faithful disciples. It has been aptly remarked by Dr. Bushnell that it is the peculiar glory of man that he has the option of dress. Other animals must wear what nature has given them, they have no power of choice; but man chooses his garments and determines its form and appearance. Dress is supposed to be for the comfort and protection of the body. But really that is but a secondary consideration. Dress is an index to character. In no one particular does a man proclaim so much of his real self as he does in the kind of clothes he wears and in the manner he wears them. It is true that a man can not change his character by changing his dress, and it is also true that no one circumstance will more fully point out a man's real self to an experienced observer than the clothes he wears. If a man comes to you clad in the costume of a savage you know at once that he is a savage. If he is a beggar or a tramp his clothes will tell his story.

Perhaps no other circumstance can exert so important a reactionary influence over a man of refined tastes and cultivated habits as the consciousness of the unsuitableness of his garments to the company with which he is associated. Few circumstances bring to a man or woman of taste more conscious humiliation than to be in company where it is expected that all will be cleanly and appropriate, in a soiled and shabby garb. The character of the "fop" is expressed much more distinctly by the shape and quality of his clothes than by anything that he may say or do. It is true that the cut of a man's coat does not shape the character of the man, but it is also true that the character of the man does dictate the cut of his coat. Few figures could have been chosen that would so aptly illustrate the real relation of character to the man.

Job speaks of righteousness as a garment to be worn, and Paul speaks of it as a robe to be put on. Paul also speaks of putting off the old man with his deeds and of putting on the new man who is created in righteousness and true holiness. The letter to the Romans is one continued endeavor of the writer to impress upon the minds of the saints at Rome a profound realization of the personal saviorhood of Jesus Christ as the one great central truth and all-inclusive fact of the Gospel, and after exhausting the vocabulary of figures that tend to illustrate that great truth, he comes to a climax in the thirteenth chapter of his epistle, when he exhorts them "to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and to make no provision for the flesh to satisfy the lusts thereof."

The church at Galatia had been led into a false notion of the gospel by certain teachers of ritualism who had come among them. They had been led to believe that Christianity was but a supplement to Judaism, and that righteousness was to be accounted to those who performed a certain set of ceremonies in a certain fixed and definite manner—that having thus "obeyed the commands" they had done what God required of them and had a right to claim their reward.

Paul wrote his epistle to the Galatians for the purpose of counteracting the ritualistic tendency of the false teachers who had come among them. To bring the people to realize that Christianity is neither a scheme of philosophy nor a set of forms and ceremonies, was no inconsiderable task at that time. Nor has two thousand years of Christian influence wholly emancipated the professed followers of Jesus from a similar bondage to the letter and the outward form. The letter to the Galatians presents Jesus Christ as the spirit of goodness, love and truth as the remedy for arbitrary ritualism. The writer insists that God has no pleasure in the performance of ceremony. That the end and aim of the gospel is to implant in the spiritual nature of man, in his faith and in his love, those qualities of character, those dispositions of mind and heart of which Jesus Christ is the embodiment and impersonation, of which he is the source and inspiration, and which qualities of spiritual goodness he is seeking to reproduce in the heart and life of man. He earnestly strives to impress upon the minds and

hearts of his readers the fact that the rewards of blessing of the divine life are not to be thought of as so much benefit to be received for so much legal or formal service rendered, but that they are the free and unmerited gift of God, graciously bestowed upon all those who are willing and fit to receive them. It is for the children of God, it is the inheritance of them who are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for those who, by loving, trusting obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, have become the heirs of God and joint heirs with his Son.

At the twenty-seventh verse of the third chapter of that letter he reminds them "that as many of them as have been baptized unto (for unto is the best rendering) Jesus Christ have put on Christ." It would be doing grave injustice to the apostle to interpret him as saying that in the act of baptism the Galatians had put off the old man with his deeds and put on Christ in the sense that by that act he had put off his former character as the servant of lust and sin and had put on the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be unjust, we say, to assume that he meant to say that the ceremony of baptism had wrought a change in their spiritual relation to God, for the doctrine of the purification of the soul by the use of outward ceremonies is the very theory that he has been controverting throughout the entire letter. It would be the extreme of absurdity to suppose that he had no higher purpose than to displace one form of ritualistic faith that he might make room for another faith of the same kind? Certainly he did no such thing; his point is doubtless to say to the Galatians that their baptism unto Jesus Christ had symbolized their inward clothing in the spiritual garments of faith and love and innocence—in the perfections of Christ's own beautiful character of purity and goodness. The Romanist who insists that the expression "this is my body which is broken for you—this is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins," must be held to imply that the real body and real blood of Christ must be present in the communion of the Lord's Supper, is no more inconsistent than are those who teach that in the act of baptism a believing sinner is actually clothed with the character of Christ. Both doctrines are Romanish, and the one is neither more nor less absurd and unscriptural than the other.

Doubtless the act of baptism is a symbol of putting on Christ; but the putting on of Christ in spirit and in truth is an act of spiritual consecration that must precede any baptism that is worthy the name, and then that putting on of Christ must be continued as a daily and hourly experience, until the Master shall say, "It is enough: come up higher." Hence it is that all that are at Rome called to be saints are admonished to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, not by being baptized, but "making no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." The man who supposes that he is to swallow the flesh of Jesus in the wafer, or to drink his cleansing blood in the winecup, or put on the high and holy qualities of his character by being dipped in the water, has got much more of the doctrines of heathenism than he has of the gospel of Jesus Christ.—*Herald of Gospel Liberty.*

Economy.

One law of the New Testament, taught by the Savior, is the law of economy. "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost." I was sorry when my good brother had forgotten this, and cast the cold meat to the dogs. God has created enough for all, but has created nothing to be wasted. The whole universe is a system of economies, and all the fragments in nature are continually gathered up and put to new uses. We cannot escape the workings of that law. Jesus has proclaimed it. Trouble, sorrow, suffering, want, in every department in life, come from wastefulness; from neglect of the fragments. The wasteful man sinks his own ship and the Lord is not to blame. He pulls down his own house that shelters him. Some men think to be wasteful is to be generous. But they are mistaken. They have confounded the meaning of the words. To be wasteful is a sin, but to be generous is one of the noblest of Christian virtues.

The meaning of economy is this: to use only what we need, and to make the most of a little. It is a principle to be wrought into our lives, until it becomes there a controlling element. For want of this, I have seen many a smiling home vanish away like the morning dew. Giving to the poor, or giving to the cause of God, is not wastefulness. It is the command of Christ that we should give. And Jesus commended the poor woman who gave all that she had.

Make method your slave but be not a slave to method.

SOLOMON'S SIN.

BY D. BAILEY.

Solomon's sin was no ordinary sin. First, because he was not an ordinary man; as he was above ordinary men in wisdom and breadth of thought, so was his sin that much more great. Nor was there anything low or mean in the conduct of Solomon, that has come to our knowledge.

David's great sin was intensely wicked but he repented "in sackcloth and in ashes," and he was forgiven, but Solomon's sin was one for which it was not so easy to repent. David did very wickedly, but he followed after the Lord with his whole mind, while Solomon, though he did no wickedness had his mind turned away from the Lord. This seeming paradox is not so difficult to explain. Israel was God's chosen people; not chosen because they were more righteous than other people, but to preserve God's will intact until such time as should suit his good pleasure to perfect the plan of human salvation. For this reason it was necessary to place upon them certain restrictions not otherwise essential. It is probable that Solomon saw this and was not therefore as strict as he might have been in obeying the instructions of the Lord.

Solomon's sin was not in accumulating wealth, nor was it in taking to himself a number of wives and yet it may, to some extent, have grown out of these. The text says: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord as did David his father. Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abominations of Moab in the hill before Jerusalem, and for Moloch, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." 1 Kings 11: 5-8.

The Mosaic law in speaking of the duties of a king (Deut. 17: 16, 17.) says: But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, 'Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.' Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." Solomon, then, in multiplying wives and gathering riches and horses trespassed on the rule laid down for the guidance of kings and the result was as predicted, that is, his heart was turned away from the Lord.

Solomon's sin was not idolatry in full. It is nowhere said that he ceased to worship the true God, but his heart was not perfect, and half of a soul as great even as Solomon's, is of no value in the sight of God. Solomon's heart was not desperately wicked, it was merely "turned away from the Lord." Wealth, desire for popularity, and the wish to please his "strange wives," did this, and the same causes are likely to produce a like effect now. Let us be very careful then that we do not forget the conditions upon which God's grace will save us now. The Jews were continually finding fault with the law of God. They could not see why it was necessary that things should be just so, and if we are not careful we will be finding the same fault with the terms on which the Lord's grace is given us. We are prone to forget that the king upon his throne is but a beggar in God's presence. The most wealthy and the most noble of earth's potentates have nothing to offer that would make the Lord their debtor.

God's grace is a free gift, but is given on conditions, and he who decides that those conditions are unreasonable or non-essential, will at last find himself in a condition similar to that in which Solomon was in in his later years, and will begin to cry out in grief: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved."

Very many of the sweetest joys of Christian hearts are songs which have been learned in the bitterness of trial. It is said of a little bird that he will never learn to sing the song his master will have him sing while it is light in his cage. He learns a snatch of every song he hears, but will not learn a full, separate melody of his own. And the master covers the cage and makes it dark all about the bird, and then he listens and learn the one song that is taught him, until his heart is full of it. Then ever after he sings the song in the light. With many of us it is as with the bird. The Master has a song he wants to teach to us, but we learn only a strain of it, a note here and there, while we catch up snatches of the world's song and sing them with it. Then he comes and makes it dark about us till we learn the sweet melody he would teach us. Many of the loveliest songs of peace and trust sung by God's children in this world they have been taught in the darkened chamber of sorrow.

PAYING PREACHERS.

BY F. W. JAMES.

It is sometimes argued that Paul worked with his own hands, and that preachers of today are no better than he. All true; but be it remembered that Paul was inspired, and had to take no thought of how or what he should say; so that it only cost him a physical effort, which is the easy part of preaching. Paul planted the Church of God in Corinth; "and he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." And while there, he worked with his own hands at tent making, with Aquila and Priscilla, his wife. But did it ever occur to those brethren who favor preachers being "hewers of wood and drawers of water," that the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of Paul, sharply rebuked the church at Corinth for suffering him to work with his own hands at tent-making? "Have I committed an offense in abasing myself [at tent-making] that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied; and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself." (2 Cor. 9.) Now this settles the question with all those who want it to be settled, that it is not right for preachers to be compelled to work at tent-making, shoe-making, blacksmithing, etc. And do you wonder that the church at Corinth became one of the most, if not the most corrupt church in the apostolic age? Covetousness is the godfather of all uncleanness and the mother of all iniquity. Hence, you can readily see why the church at Corinth became a receptacle of every unclean bird.

Show me a covetous man or woman, and I will show you a walking Achan, who is opposed to paying preachers; who hides his money in his tent! Show me a covetous congregation, and I will show you a church whose poor go to the poor-house, and whose sick are cared for by the world, and whose preacher (if they have one,) goes half fed, and whose God is Aaron's calf! I think the host of cheerful givers in the church will voice the above sentiment, for they have had some experience with these Ananias and Sapphiras.

Paul, speaking to uninspired preachers, said: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Hence, a man of the pulpit must be a student which takes time. And the age in which we live requires a man to be an incessant student, not only in the Bible, but also the sciences, that he may be a workman indeed. How is it possible, then, for a preacher to be a tent-maker and a faithful student? Let Paul answer: "No man [preacher] that warreth [preaches] entangleth himself with the affairs [secular callings] of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier [preacher]." (2 Tim. 1.) And I doubt whether one of our preachers would entangle himself "with the affairs of this life" if the church were living up to her duty in supporting the ministry. But oftentimes, Paul-like a meat-and-bread necessity compels him to put his hand to the plow. I am fully persuaded, if our ministry were sufficiently remunerated, and thus give all their time to the work, that Zion would flourish as the rose of Sharon, and the waste places made to rejoice! It is understood that I am speaking of a faithful Bible ministry, and not the progressive-ness toward-Rome preaching. When Jesus sent out preachers, they preached and nothing else; and they lack nothing, and the world was turned upside down. This work Christ has delegated to the bride, and when she does as did the bridegroom, the same result will follow the preaching of the word. But with all our boasting of this being a Christian nation—a superlatively Bible land, whose Constitution has God in it, and whose money says, "In God we trust"—yet the following statistics are enough to put to blush every moral citizen:

Annual support of preachers of all denominations.....	\$ 6,000,000
Annual support of dogs.....	10,000,000
Annual support of criminals.....	12,000,000
For tobacco and cigars.....	510,000,000
For whiskey.....	2,300,000,000

From the above table, taken from the Southern Presbyterian Review, it will be seen that even the dogs of this Christian (?) nation get a support of \$4,000,000 more per year than the preachers! Let the curtain drop, for comment is not necessary.—*Christian Review.*

He that is master of himself will soon be master of others.

Choose such pleasures as recreate and cost little.